Inclusion of Rivers in the Concurrent List

1662. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to take out rivers from the State List and include it in the Concurrent List; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) As per Entry 56 of List-I under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, regulation and development of inter-State rivers and river valleys to the extent to which such regulation and development under the control of the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the public interest is in the Union List. However, water, that is to say, water supplies, irrigation and canals, drainage and embankments, water storage and water power subject to the provisions of Entry 56 of List-I is with the State Governments as per Entry 17—State List. There is no proposal with the Government to change any of these provisions in the Constitution.

(b) Does not arise.

Reclamation of Lands Swallowed by Rivers

1663. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the plight of people in parts of Uttar Pradesh who have been rendered homeless and landless due to the change in the course of Yamuna rivers;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard;

(c) whether other areas with similar problem have been identified; and

(d) whether Government expect a pan-Indian effort towards reclamation of land swallowed by rivers which have changed their course?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) As per information furnished by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, they have taken up basin wise approach to contain the course of

river Yamuna. In first phase, 27 flood protection scheme have been taken up and completed in the Yamuna basin by them to check the change in the river course. Further, change of course by rivers being a natural phenomenon known as meandering of rivers, it is neither possible nor viable to check the same in whole length of rivers. However, in selected reaches, where it is necessary to protect the important structures, townships, etc. suitable flood protection measures are taken up.

Statutory Powers to River Board Organisations

1664. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Statutory powers for River Board Organisations in the management of water resources have been opposed by certain State Governments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) National Water Resources Council (NWRC) while deliberating the draft revised National Water Policy in its 4th Meeting held on 7th July, 2000 considered *inter alia* the provision relating to setting up of River Basin Organisations (RBOs) with statutory powers. Some of the States like Goa, Himachal Pradesh Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh had opposed the setting up of RBOs with statutory powers. In view of the divergent views expressed on this provision relating to RBOs and other provisions of the draft revised National Water policy by the members of NWRC, a Working Group under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Water Resources was constituted to examine the draft provisions. The Working Group has discussed this issue and after arriving at a near consensus, it has recommended to NWRC *inter-alia* a draft provision on setting up of RBOs without proposing the statutory/regulatory powers thereto.